

Message Text

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COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 TOKYO 0272

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: JA, MARR
SUBJECT: NEXT COST-SHARING STEPS

SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE PUTS FORWARD EMBASSY'S SUGGESTIONS IN LIGHT OF RECENT LABOR-COST SHARING AGREEMENT FOR ADVANCING EFFORT TO SEEK ADDITIONAL JAPANESE ASSISTANCE IN MEETING OUR DEFENSE COSTS IN JAPAN. WE RECOMMEND THAT WE TAKE HARD LOOK AT SEVERAL ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES, INCLUDING IDENTIFICATION OF COSTS GOJ MIGHT ASSUME ON GROUNDS RELATED TO PUBLIC SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT, ETC., THAT WOULD NOT DEMAND REINTERPRETATION OF SOFA; STUDY OF COSTS THAT MIGHT BE ASSUMED AT JOINT BASES AND, IF THIS AVENUE SHOWS PROMISE, EVALUATION OF ADDITIONAL JOINT-BASING POSSIBILITIES; AND RE-EXAMINATION OF RELOCATION PLANS TO MAKE SURE THEY REFLECT OUR MOST URGENT PRIORITIES. IN VIEW OF HINTS FROM GOJ SIDE THAT OHIRA VIEW MIGHT BE OVERCOME, WE RECOMMEND ALSO IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL PROJECTS, PARTICULARLY HOUSING, TO PROPOSE TO GOJ. ONCE WE HAVE OUR IDEAS IN ORDER, IT MAY BE WORTHWHILE HAVING SMALL INFORMAL EXPLORATORY SESSION WITH JAPANESE AT WORKING LEVEL TO SOUND OUT RECEPTIVITY AND REFINE OUR THINKING. IT IS POSSIBLE JAPANESE MAY AS PRICE FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE

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ASK FOR REVIEW OF LONG-STANDING SOFA IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES AND AGREEMENTS WITH VIEW TO MODERNIZATION. CAREFUL CONSIDERATION SHOULD PRECEDE US RESPONSE BUT WE DO NOT THINK WE SHOULD RULE OUT SUCH AS A STUDY. END SUMMARY.

1. AS DUST SETTLES ON LABOR-COST-SHARING AGREEMENT, EMBASSY AND USFJ HAVE BEGUN TO GIVE SOME THOUGHT TO BEST WAY TO

PROCEED TO SECURE ADDITIONAL RELIEF FOR OUR DEFENSE COSTS IN JAPAN. BURDEN SHARING IS WHAT WE ARE AFTER, ALTHOUGH THIS REMAINS FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS AN UNACCEPTABLE TERM FOR GOJ. IN COURSE OF RECENT LABOR-COST NEGOTIATIONS, ADDRESSEES WILL RECALL THAT GOJ REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED THAT SOFA INTERPRETATIONS, NOT THE AMOUNT AT STAKE, WAS PROBLEM AND THAT THERE WERE OTHER AREAS IN WHICH GOJ SAW POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING ADDITIONAL HELP IN FUTURE. FOLLOWING ARE EMBASSY'S PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON HOW BEST TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OPENING, WHAT MUST BE DONE TO PREPARE OURSELVES FOR RENEWED COST-SHARING DIALOGUE, AND HOW TO BROACH ISSUE WITH GOJ.

2. WE SEE SEVERAL POSSIBLE APPROACHES, OVERLAPPING TO SOME EXTENT IN CONTENT. ONE POSSIBILITY WOULD BE TO ANALYZE O&M EXPENSES TO FIND RUBRICS UNDER WHICH GOJ COULD ASSUME EXPENSES ON BASIS OF WELL-BEING OF JAPANESE CITIZENRY, OR IN NATIONAL INTEREST. SUCH EXPENSES COULD COVER BOTH LABOR AND NON-LABOR COSTS. EXAMPLES OF LABOR AREA WOULD BE GOJ ASSUMPTION OF COSTS OF BASE-SECURITY AND FIREFIGHTING PERSONNEL UNDER SOME SUCH RUBRICS AS "PUBLIC SAFETY" OR "ENVIRONMENT" EXPENSES. TO SOME EXTENT WE ATTEMPTED TO DO JUST THIS IN TABLING OUR SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE SOFA INTERPRETATIONS TO GET AROUND ARTICLE XXIV. WHILE THE SETTLEMENT REACHED LAST MONTH DID IN FACT USE "SOCIAL WELFARE" AS A RATIONALE FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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PICKING UP CERTAIN ITEMS, GOJ WAS NOT INCLINED TO GO BEYOND THIS. POSSIBILITY SHOULD NOT BE EXCLUDED, HOWEVER, OF EXPLORING THIS AVENUE AGAIN, PARTICULARLY IF DONE IN A JOINT-BASING FRAMEWORK (SEE BELOW).

3. NON-LABOR EXPENSES MIGHT INCLUDE MODIFICATIONS REQUIRED TO MEET US OR JAPANESE ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS. WHILE WE DOUBT THAT JAPANESE WOULD BE WILLING TO PAY FOR MODIFICATIONS IN US EQUIPMENT, THEY MIGHT POSSIBLY HELP OUT IN REGARD TO ON-SHORE FACILITIES SUCH AS POL STORAGE, ETC. (REF: COMUSJAPAN 030630Z).

4. SECOND, RELATED APPROACH MIGHT BE TO EXAMINE WHAT COSTS GOJ WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE ON AT EXISTING JOINT BASES IF, FOR EXAMPLE, JAPANESE FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ASSUME SUPPORT FOR SECURITY GUARDS AT US BASES. IN REGARD TO PUBLIC SAFETY, THEY MIGHT PERHAPS DO SO AT JOINT BASES. SHOULD THIS SEEM A PROFITABLE AVENUE OF COST SHARING, WE MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER WHETHER ADDITIONAL INSTALLATIONS COULD BE CONVERTED TO JOINT BASES -- WITH ANCILLARY BENEFITS OF ENHANCING SENSE OF MUTUAL SECURITY COOPERATION.

5. SUBSTANTIALLY DIFFERENT APPROACH WOULD BE TO EMPHASIZE JAPANESE ASSISTANCE FOR CONSTRUCTION OR REHABILITATION OF FACILITIES. THIS COULD TAKE FORM OF ACCELERATING CONSTRUCTION UNDER PRESENT RELOCATION PLANS; REORDERING EXISTING PRIORITIES (WITH POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTIONS); OR ADD-ON CONSTRUCTION, WHICH WOULD ENTAIL GETTING AROUND OHIRA VIEW. HOUSING, URGENTLY NEEDED, PARTICULARLY BY AIR FORCE AND NAVY, MIGHT BE PROMISING AREA INASMUCH AS IT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH JAPANESE EFFORTS TO STIMULATE ECONOMY; ASSUMING LAND WERE AVAILABLE, COULD BE

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IMPLEMENTED IN RELATIVELY SHORT TIME SPAN; WOULD BE RELATIVELY NON-CONTROVERSIAL IN TERMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS, ETC.; AND WOULD OFFER SIZEABLE COST SAVINGS BY RELIEVING SERVICE BUDGETS OF SUBSIDIES FOR OFF-BASE HOUSING.

6. OUT-AND-OUT ASSUMPTION OF SPECIFIC O&M COSTS BY GOJ WOULD PERHAPS BE MOST DESIRABLE ALTERNATIVE OF ALL, BUT IT SEEMS MOST UNLIKELY GOJ WOULD GO ALONG. THERE IS NO HARM, HOWEVER, IN ASKING JAPANESE CONSIDERATION TO GRANT RELIEF THROUGH SUCH DEVICES AS OFFERING FAVORABLE RATES FOR UTILITIES.

7. FURTHER POSSIBILITY WOULD BE TO REVIEW MILITARY MISSIONS TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE MIGHT NOT BE AREAS WHERE JSDF COULD TAKE OVER RESPONSIBILITY. OFF HAND THERE WOULD BE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES IN MANY AREAS AND WE COULD ALSO RUN INTO CONFLICT WITH CURRENT POST-FOURTH DEFENSE PLAN,

WHICH SETS PRIORITY DEFENSE SPENDING GOALS FOR JSDF FOR NEXT FEW YEARS. WE WOULD NOT, FOR EXAMPLE, WISH TO DIVERT GOJ FROM USING RESOURCES FOR ASW AND AIR DEFENSE, WHERE WE HAVE LONG URGED IT TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS. WE SUGGEST THAT WE NONETHELESS LOOK INTO POSSIBILITY OF

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TRANSFERRING FUNCTIONS, IF ONLY TO MINOR EXTENT.

8. FINAL APPROACH THAT OCCURS TO US IS TO AGREE ON NET RELIEF WE HOPE TO ATTAIN, ATTEMPT TO GET JAPANESE TO ACCEPT SET AMOUNT OF DOLLARS AS GOAL, AND LET JAPANESE DECIDE WHAT THEY CAN MOST FEASIBLY WORK OUT. SUCH AN APPROACH HAS VIRTUE OF PLACING BURDEN ON GOJ TO TELL US WHAT WILL WASH, BUT RUNS RISK THAT WE WOULD NOT GET WHAT WE WOULD MOST NEED, OR THAT WE WOULD DISCARD OTHER POSSIBILITIES TOO EARLY IN GAME.

9. IT MAY WELL BE THAT COMBINATION OF APPROACHES OUTLINED ABOVE, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN PARAS 2-5, IS MOST VIABLE APPROACH, IN WHICH EVENT WE WILL HAVE TO DO OUR HOMEWORK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO DETERMINE PRIORITIES AND COORDINATE SERVICE PLANS. IN SO DOING, WE SHOULD HAVE IN MIND AN END-PRODUCT PROPOSAL CALCULATED NOT ONLY TO OFFER BUDGETARY RELIEF, BUT ONE WHICH CAN BE SOLD TO JAPANESE ON GROUNDS THAT THE ADDITIONAL GOJ ASSISTANCE REQUESTED WILL FACILITATE THE MAINTENANCE OF A FORWARD FORCE POSTURE, THUS HELPING TO ALLEVIATE CONCERN ABOUT FURTHER US WITHDRAWALS.

10. AT SAME TIME THAT WE CLARIFY OUR OWN IDEAS IN REGARD TO MOST DESIRABLE PACKAGE AND POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES, WE NEED TO CONSIDER HOW WE FLOAT IT WITH JAPANESE. WHILE HIGH-LEVEL EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST AND FORMAL REPRESENTATIONS WILL PLAY A ROLE, HERE WE MAY NEED HELP FROM JAPANESE THEMSELVES. ACCORDINGLY, WHEN OUR OWN IN-HOUSE THINKING HAS PROCEEDED TO AN APPROPRIATE POINT, WE WOULD SUGGEST UNPUBLICIZED WORKING-LEVEL "THINK SESSION" BETWEEN SMALL NUMBER OF EMBASSY/USFJ AND MOFA/JDA REPRESENTATIVES, AT WHICH WE COULD EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES WITHOUT COMMITMENT. (THERE IS USEFUL PRECEDENT FOR THIS DEVICE IN 1972

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SESSIONS AT WHICH NUMBER OF SECURITY ISSUES WERE EXPLORED TO MUTUAL BENEFIT IN OFF-CAMPUS ATMOSPHERE.)

11. THERE MAY BE A PRICE FOR ALL THIS, BUT ONE WHICH IS

NOT NECESSARILY UNACCEPTABLE. ALTHOUGH GOJ HOLDS STRONGLY THAT WE SHOULD NOT RENEGOTIATE OR AMEND SOFA -- VIEW WE SHARE -- WE ARE AWARE OF ARGUMENT BEING PRESSED IN MOFA THAT EXISTING UNDERSTANDINGS AND AGREEMENTS IMPLEMENTING SOFA SHOULD BE REVIEWED WITH OBJECTIVE OF ELIMINATING THOSE THAT ARE OBSOLETE AND MODERNIZING OTHERS. WHILE WE HAVE NOT STUDIED WHAT WOULD BE INVOLVED, WE WOULD GUESS THAT SOME REVISIONS WOULD BE IN JAPANESE INTERESTS BUT THAT OTHERS MIGHT POSSIBLY BE USEFUL FROM OUR STANDPOINT. GOJ HAS BEGUN TO PREPARE FOR SUCH AN EXERCISE THROUGH ITS MISSIONS TO NATO COUNTRIES IN 1976 AND 1977 AND MOFA HAS INDICATED ITS INTENTION TO CONTINUE SUCH VISITS IN FUTURE WITH PARTICIPATION OF OFFICIALS FROM VARIOUS AGENCIES, INCLUDING

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ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY, NATIONAL POLICE, ETC.
WE WOULD WANT TO MAKE OUR OWN STUDY IN ORDER TO DETERMINE HOW JAPANESE PRACTICE COMPARES WITH OUR OPERATIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES, AND WILL PROBABLY NEED DOD/STATE HELP FOR SUCH AN EXERCISE. WE WOULD ALSO WANT TO AVOID LONG, DRAWN-OUT TIDYING-UP EXERCISE, AND CONCENTRATE ON AREAS WHERE WE EITHER BELIEVE JAPANESE ARE LIKELY TO HAVE DESIDERATA OR WHERE WE SEE POSSIBILITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT. IN INTERIM, IF PROPOSAL FOR SOFA INTERPRETATION REVIEW IS RAISED BY JAPANESE, WE RECOMMEND THAT WE NOT REJECT IT OUT OF HAND BUT PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY. TO BE SURE, THERE IS NO DIRECT LINKAGE BETWEEN COST-SHARING AND SOFA PRACTICE, BUT WE WOULD NOT BE AT ALL SURPRISED IF A DE FACTO RELATIONSHIP WERE ESTABLISHED AS WE MOVE ALONG.

12. IN CONCLUSION, WE RECOMMEND THAT:

(1) WE ANALYZE O&M EXPENSES TO PINPOINT THOSE THAT GOJ MIGHT ASSUME BASED ON GROUNDS THAT WOULD NOT DEMAND REINTERPREATION OF SOFA.

(2) WE DETERMINE WHETHER THERE ARE COSTS AT JOINT BASES THAT GOJ MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO ASSUME, AND EXAMINE POSSIBILITIES FOR EXPANDING JOINT BASES IF SAVINGS CAN BE ACHIEVED.

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(3) WE REVIEW PRESENT RELOCATION PLANS TO MAKE SURE THEY REFLECT OUR MOST URGENT PRIORITIES, AND THAT WE INCLUDE IN SUCH A REVIEW ADDITIONAL PROJECTS IN PRIORITY ORDER, EVEN IF THEY ARE CURRENTLY RULED OUT BY OHIRA VIEW.

(4) WHILE LESS PROMISING, WE ALSO TAG OTHER O&M EXPENSES JAPANESE MIGHT CONCEIVABLY ASSUME AND REVIEW MISSIONS WE MIGHT CONCEIVABLY URGE JSDF TO TAKE OVER.

13. ABOVE THOUGHTS ARE THROWN OUT WITHOUT ADVOCACY IN HOPE THEY MIGHT BE HELPFUL IN ORIENTING OUR THINKING FOR NEXT MAJOR COST-SHARING APPROACH TO GOJ. WE BELIEVE THIME IS RIPE TO TAKE UP JAPANESE ON PROTESTATIONS THEY REALLY WANTED TO DO MORE IN REGARD TO LABOR COSTS, AND A DEMARCHE WOULD ALSO BE WELL TIMED IN LIGHT OF GOJ COMMITMENTS TO CLOSE BOP GAP. PERHAPS ADDRESSEE REPRESENTATIVES WILL WISH TO HAVE CORRIDOR DISCUSSION OF SOME OF THESE IDEAS IN HONOLULU.

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